No. It's fine. I'll be mostly inside school anyway. Their heaters will be fine...probably.

I'm looking forward to the change of environment too.

Alright. Well before we do leave, I have something to give you. It will come in handy since you'll start officially getting some real time experience.

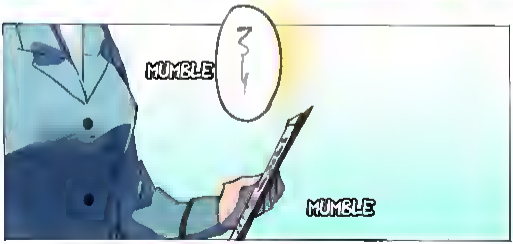
This collar is infused

I'M SO SORRY ARE YOU ALRIGHT?
CATCH!
I WASN'T LOOKING WHERE I WAS GO--
WAAHHH

PEER PRESSURE, BULLIES, BEING REJECTED BY THAT GIRL YOU HAD A CRUSH ON FOR THREE MONTHS, EXAMS, PROCRASTINATING ON BIG PROJECTS...
AND NOT TO FORGET PUBERTY IN GENERAL... IT'S A NATURAL BREEDING GROUND FOR TIMOREM
IT'S NO SURPRISE THAT WE GET CALLED IN EVERY OTHER MONTH.
I SENSED A LOT OF BITTERNESS IN HIS EXPLANATION JUST NOW
GLOOM
...

FINALLY.

MUMBLE


MUMBLE
MUMBLE

LOOKS LIKE YOU'VE BEEN SUPER BUSY.

OUR CHANTS WITHOUT YOUR FORTITUDE.

YOU'LL LEARN THE CHANTS DURING AN ACTUAL TIMOREM ENCOUNTER SO JUST SIT TIGHT FOR NOW.

THAT THING IS ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY FOR THE TIME BEING. SO BE PATIENT.

GLOOOOOOOM

I UNDERSTAND

CAN WE JUST STOP BY SOMEWHERE TO PICK UP A SCARF OR SOMETHING, THEN?

OK!

catharsis

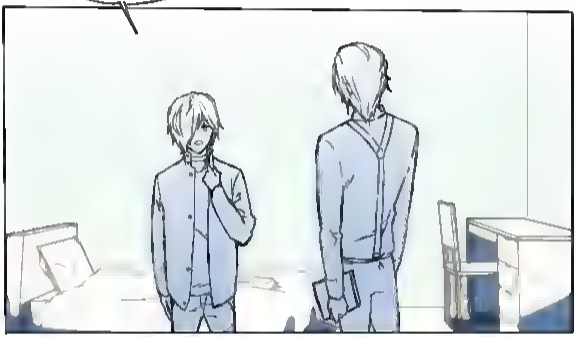
By. Ahnika

MAYBE A COAT WOULDN'T HAVE BEEN SO BAD TO STOP FOR

KNOCK
KNOCK
IT'S OPEN.
SO HOW'S THE UNIFORM FIT?
YOUR OLD ONE WAS RIPPED TO SHREDS SO WE FIGURED IT'S BETTER TO GET YOU A NEW ONE.
IT FITS FINE.
THANKS.
IT'S LIKE I'M FINALLY BE RELEASED FROM BOOT CAMP OR SOMETHING.

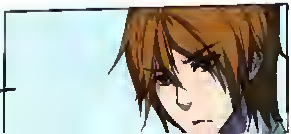
EVERYTHING WE DID IT SEEMS LIKE SOMETHING I WON'T BE ABLE TO GET.

CAN'T YOU JUST TEACH ME SOME OF THOSE FANCY SPELL THINGS THAT YOU GUYS DO SO THAT I WON'T HAVE TO GO OUT LIKE THIS?

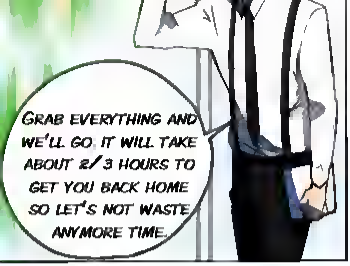


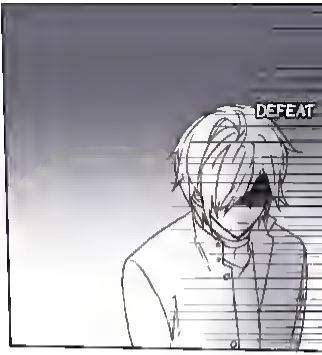
...PLEASE?

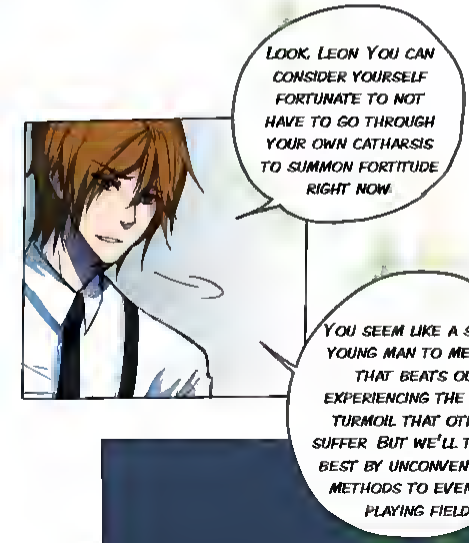
WELL THAT'S THE THING. THIS ALSO SERVES AS AN AID TO PROVIDING YOU MANA TO ACTUALLY USE



BUMP!


GRAB EVERYTHING AND WE'LL GO. IT WILL TAKE ABOUT 2/3 HOURS TO GET YOU BACK HOME SO LET'S NOT WASTE ANYMORE TIME.


DEFEAT


LOOK, LEON YOU CAN CONSIDER YOURSELF FORTUNATE TO NOT HAVE TO GO THROUGH YOUR OWN CATHARSIS TO SUMMON FORTITUDE RIGHT NOW.
YOU SEEM LIKE A SOUND YOUNG MAN TO ME, AND THAT BEATS OUT EXPERIENCING THE INNER TURMOIL THAT OTHERS SUFFER. BUT WE'LL TRY OUR BEST BY UNCONVENTIONAL METHODS TO EVEN THE PLAYING FIELD.

LE-

LEON!

Well... from how you nonchalantly accept the alibi I'm giving you, I'm sure you're underestimating how prestige of reward it is to be offered a spot in "High Potential".

Even though you really weren't.

Your school was informed and probably boasted about it along with the papers.

You became just a little famous.

(EARLIER THAT MORNING)

〈 EARLIER, DURING THE DRIVE TO SCHOOL 〉

YEAH

...SO DOES THIS MEAN THAT I'LL POSSIBLY RUN INTO TIMOREM AT SCHOOL?

YEAH.

WE'VE GOTTEN A NOTICE A FEW WEEKS BACK AND IT ISN'T REALLY UNCOMMON.

HIGH SCHOOL IS A MELTING POT OF DISTRESSED AND EMOTIONAL SOULS. IT MAY BE A BREEZE FOR SOME, BUT FOR OTHERS, IT'S PRACTICALLY A STRUGGLE.

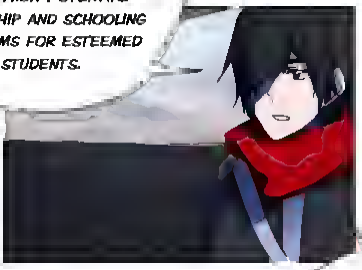
YOU GOT CLIQUES.

WITH A CHARM TO PROTECT YOU IF YOU SO HAPPEN TO GET CAUGHT UP WITH A TIMOREM. SIMPLY JUST PULL IT APART IF YOU SO HAPPEN TO WANDER INTO ANOTHER VEIL OR IF YOU FEEL LIKE YOU'RE IN DANGER.
THE INDIVIDUAL CHARMS WILL SCATTER AND CREATE A TEMPORARY SHIELD TO WARD AGAINST TIMOREM. DURING THAT TIME, EITHER ME OR PARIS WILL COME STRAIGHT TO YOUR AID.
A COLLAR? MIGHT AS WELL THROW IN A LEASH TOO... WHO CAME UP WITH THIS DESIGN?
ISN'T THIS A LITTLE TOO KINKY?
STAAAAAAAAARE
THERE'S NO WAY I WOULDN'T BE CALLED OUT FOR THIS THING AROUND MY NECK.

...AM I BEING TOO INCONSPICUOUS RIGHT NOW?
I COVERED UP THE WEIRD COLLAR HARVEY GAVE ME FOR SURE... WHY ARE THEY GLANCING SO MUCH THIS WAY?

IT'S A LOT MORE CHILLY THAN I WAS EXPECTING.

so K Enterprises took me in as reward for saving one of their (top tier) employee's child and registered me in their "High Potential" internship and schooling programs for esteemed students.



Seeing that I'm uninterested in working for K Enterprise, I declined after two months to insist on going home.

I wonder how Julian is doing now anyway. To think he was some big shot's son...

AH HA... IT'S KIND OF AN UNDERSTATEMENT WHEN YOU PUT IT THAT WAY... BUT YEAH.
I'M JUST READY TO LEAVE ALREADY.
IT'S LIKE THE FIRST TIME I'VE EVER BECOME SO EXCITED TO GO TO SCHOOL AGAIN. I'M GETTING A LITTLE ANXIOUS.
SO STRAIGHT TO SCHOOL THEN? YOU SURE YOU DON'T WANNA STOP BY YOUR HOUSE TO PICK UP A COAT OR SOMETHING FIRST?
IT'S GOTTEN A LOT COOLER BACK AT YOUR PLACE.

LINE Webtoon

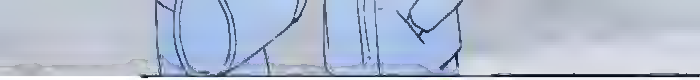
SOMETHING SO BIZARRE AS CATHARSIS.

THEY'VE BEEN AROUND FOR A LOOOOT LONGER THAN YOU THINK. IT'S A STORY FOR ANOTHER TIME BUT ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW IS THAT THEY'VE GOT THE MONEY AND THE POWER TO DO SO.

OH! AND AS COMPENSATION FOR YOUR SERVICES WITH US, YOU DO GET PAID A BIT FOR MEETING THE DUTIES OF A CATHARSIS AGENT. JUST ONE OF THE FEW PERKS THAT YOU'VE ESTABLISHED IN YOUR LIFE FOR THE TIME BEING.

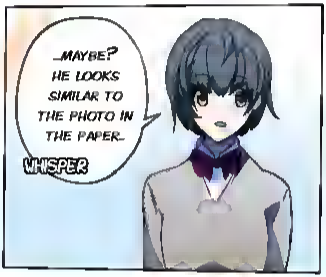
IS THERE MORE?

GLANCE
GLANCE
STARE

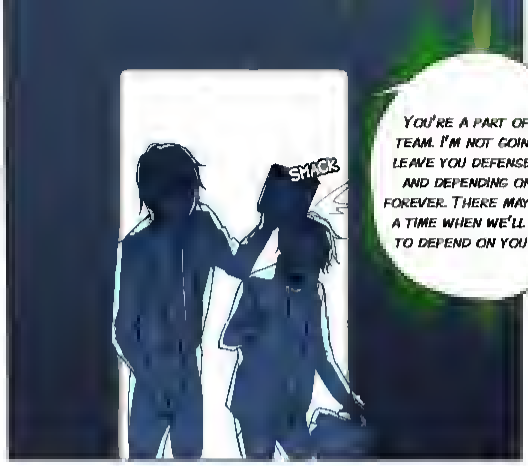


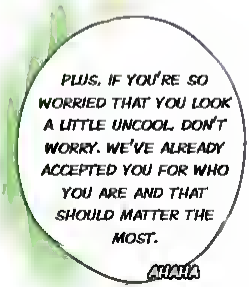
So it turns out just like
what Harvey said in the car.

ISN'T THAT THE "HERO" GUY?
WHISPER


...MAYBE? HE LOOKS SIMILAR TO THE PHOTO IN THE PAPER...
WHISPER

HM? THE "HERO" KID CAME BACK?
GLANCE
HEEH... YOU SURE THAT'S HIM THOUGH?
GLANCE

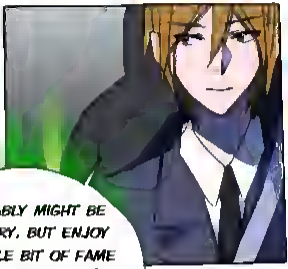

SHARK
You're a part of my team. I'm not going to leave you defenseless and depending on us forever. There may come a time when we'll need to depend on you too.

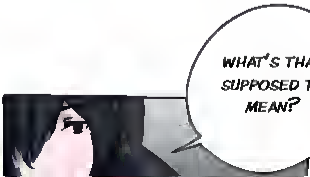

Plus, if you're so worried that you look a little uncool, don't worry. We've already accepted you for who you are and that should matter the most.
AHAHA

Good thing we pressed you on studying. Heheheh...

So.. is K Enterprises your employer too? For Catharsis I mean
I know that it's a pretty big and renown company, but I really wasn't expecting that it was

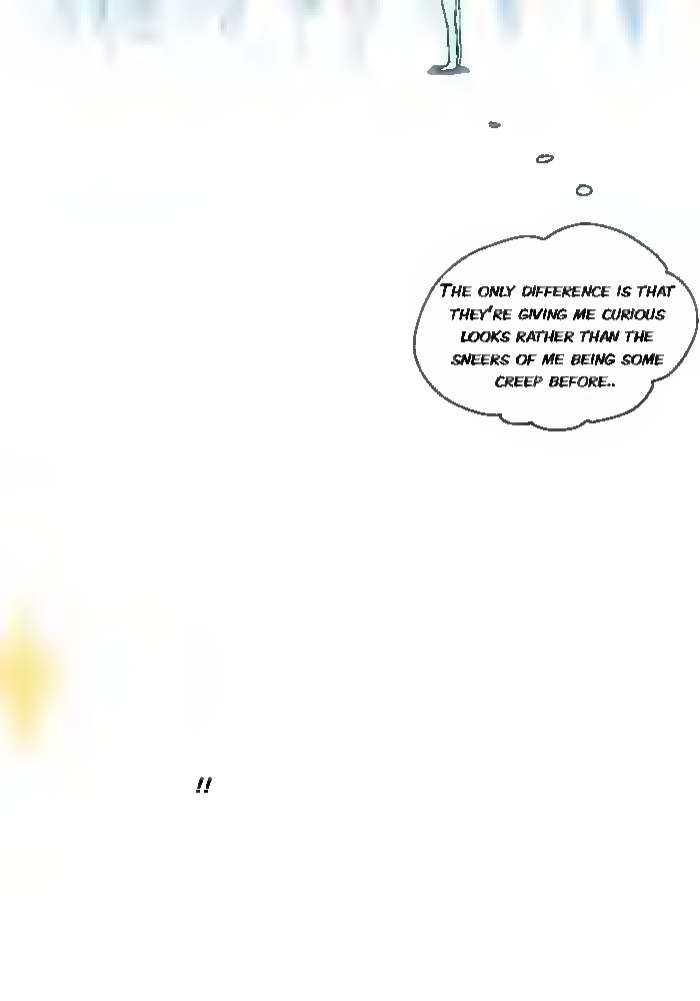
There were papers of it?

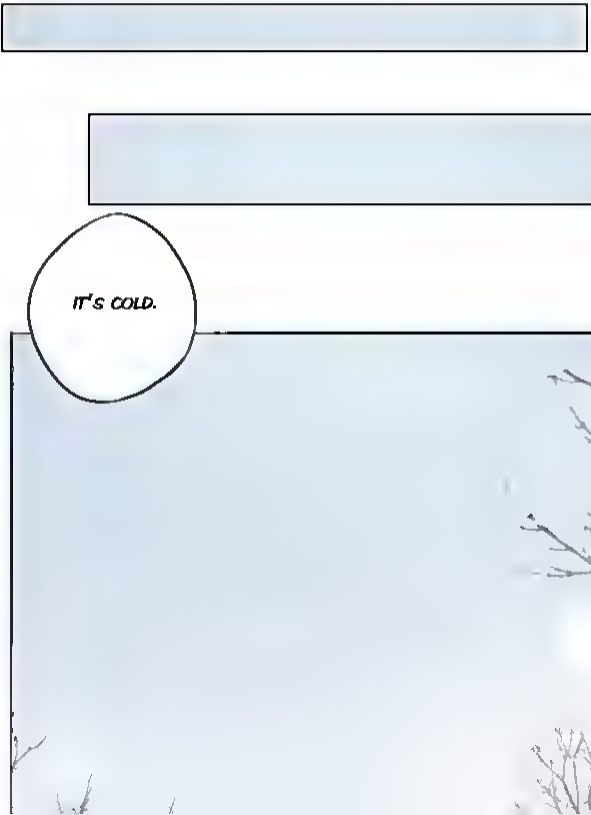

It probably might be temporary, but enjoy your little bit of fame for now. Maybe you'll even make a few friends this way too.
...seeing that you could be better off with a few friends your age maybe?


What's that supposed to mean?

THIS DOESN'T SUIT ME AT ALL.

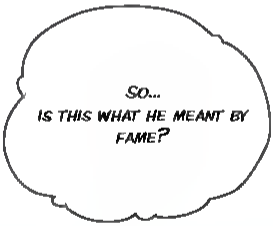
BLANK STARE


THE ONLY DIFFERENCE IS THAT THEY'RE GIVING ME CURIOUS LOOKS RATHER THAN THE SNEERS OF ME BEING SOME CREEP BEFORE..
!!


IT'S COLD.

JUST THINK OF THIS AS THE BEGINNING OF LEARNING THE BASICS OF MANA AND VEIL RELATED TRAINING.
YOU GOTTA START SOMEWHERE. AND UNTIL YOU LEARN TO SUMMON YOUR FORTITUDE, YOU'LL HAVE TO RELY ON THIS TRINKET.
SO DON'T LOOK SO DOWN.
YOU'VE MENTIONED FORTITUDE A LOT SINCE THE START. AND FROM

AFTERALL. PLUS.. I WOULDN'T HAVE HAD TO SPEND MONEY ON THIS SCARF
BUT THEN I'D RUN THE RISK OF NOT RUNNING INTO HER IF I ENDED UP LATE...
WAAHHH... I'VE BEEN STANDING HERE FOR LIKE HALF AN HOUR ALREADY...
OH..


SO...
IS THIS WHAT HE MEANT BY FAME?